




UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

May 17, 2000

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Designating EPA Leaders for the National Environmental Performance Partnership System

FROM: Diane E. Thompson 
Associate Administrator

TO: Assistant Administrators
Deputy Assistant Administrators
Regional Administrators
Deputy Regional Administrators

Last month the Deputy Administrator issued a memorandum reaffirming the Agency's commitment to the principles of the National Environmental Performance Partnership System (NEPPS). This reaffirmation strengthens our resolve to achieve an ambitious goal: to transform NEPPS principles from lofty ideals into fundamental business practices that will enhance EPA and States' ability to protect human health and the environment. To achieve this goal the Agency must integrate NEPPS principles in a visible way into all aspects of the Agency's work with the States. Integrating NEPPS firmly into our business practices will require each National Program Manager (NPM) and Regional Administrator (RA) to continue providing strong, consistent leadership.

We must act quickly to build on the momentum generated by our formal recommitment to NEPPS, and on the significant progress we have made since the inception of NEPPS in May of 1995. To help lead the Agency toward our goal, the Deputy Administrator and I are asking each DRA and DAA to serve as the designated NEPPS leader for his or her Region or program. Many DRAs and DAAs already have been performing this function, and it is you we have to thank for much of the progress we have made to date. Through this designation, we are seeking to formalize and give greater visibility to this responsibility.

Individually, NEPPS leaders must be able to provide visible, senior leadership to Agency management and staff, and also work directly with State commissioners to implement NEPPS. Each NEPPS leader will be responsible for ensuring that his or her organization takes concrete

steps to improve NEPPS. These steps include:

- integrating NEPPS into planning and budgeting activities under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA);
- ensuring high-level State involvement in both NPM priority-setting and GPRA target development;
- training all staff on NEPPS principles and implementation; and
- convening Region-State NEPPS workshops.

DRAs and DAAs have the responsibility and experience that are commensurate with the challenges of holding the Agency accountable for improving NEPPS. As senior managers with primary responsibility for strategic planning, budgeting, and program management, the DAAs and DRAs have exactly the broad, agency-wide perspective that is critical to reaching our goal of integrating NEPPS into our core business practices. We are aware of the additional time commitment required of each NEPPS leader. Therefore we recommend that each NPM and Region designate a senior manager and staff to assist the NEPPS leader as necessary.

In addition, DAAs and DRAs already serve as members of the Reinvention Action Council (RAC), which is the Agency's senior policy council for NEPPS. NEPPS leaders would advise the RAC on the status of NEPPS and what actions the Agency should take to improve performance partnerships. OCIR will report to the Deputy Administrator on the Agency's progress in making NEPPS an integral part of how we do business with our co-regulators.

States face challenges to implementing NEPPS that are similar to ours. If we are to be successful in engaging the senior management of the States in NEPPS, EPA must be willing to participate and lead at that level. The Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations (OCIR) will work closely with the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) and State commissioners over the next few months to encourage State commissioners to designate NEPPS leaders. We hope that States will be prepared to announce their leaders at the next ECOS meeting this August. Whether or not States designate NEPPS leaders, there is a great deal we can accomplish within EPA to strengthen our application and integration of NEPPS principles in the Agency's work with the States.

With strong leadership from NEPPS leaders within the Agency and among States, we will continue our progress in enhancing performance partnerships. We look forward to working closely with your designated NEPPS leaders to accomplish this goal.